Postcolonial Directions in Education
Volume 9 Issue 2, 2020 | 226-271

"SECOND-CHANCE" EDUCATION: RE-DEFINING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN GRENADA

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Abstract: With the end of the Grenada Revolution and the subsequent American invasion, the nation's education policies shifted from being conceptualised as a national development strategy "fashioned in our own image", to being a project aiming to strengthen the region's global marketplace participation through the creation of the "ideal Caribbean person/citizen/worker". Recognising the discursive shifts in education and development, this article focuses on how Grenadian youth (16-24) interpret these institutional objectives through their participation in "second-chance" education, or non-formal education. Following Henri Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad, the analysis examines the concept of "second-chance" education as a socially produced space conceived by the state, perceived by organisations, and lived by the students. The article reveals gaps between discourse and practices of youth *in* development, highlighting ways in which youth actively navigate and respond to the socioeconomic and geographic realities involved with "second-chance" education organisations, national growth, and regional integration.

Abstract (Spanish) Con el fin de la Revolución de Granada y la subsiguiente invasión estadounidense, las

políticas nacionales de la educación pasaron de ser conceptualizadas como una estrategia de desarrollo nacional “hecha a nuestra imagen”, a ser un proyecto que apunta a fortalecer la participación del mercado global de la región a través de creación de la “persona/ciudadano/trabajador caribeño ideal”. Reconociendo los cambios discursivos en la educación y el desarrollo, este artículo se centra en cómo los jóvenes granadinos (16 a 24 años) interpretan estos objetivos institucionales a través de su participación en la educación de “segunda oportunidad”, o educación no formal. Siguiendo la tríada espacial de Henri Lefebvre (1991), el análisis reconoce el concepto de educación de "segunda oportunidad" como un espacio producido socialmente, concebido por el estado, percibido por las organizaciones, y vivido por los estudiantes. El artículo revela las brechas entre el discurso y las prácticas de la juventud en el desarrollo, resaltando las formas en que la juventud navega y responde activamente a las realidades socioeconómicas y geográficas relacionadas con las organizaciones educativas de "segunda oportunidad", el crecimiento nacional, y la integración regional.

KEYWORDS Second-chance education, youth development, sociospatial analysis, CARICOM, Grenada

Introduction

In Grenada, a postcolonial and postrevolutionary state, education policies have transitioned from being a strategy that promoted the goal of equity and national development during the socialist-oriented Revolution (1979-1983), to being a regional cooperative project aimed at stimulating participation in the global marketplace in the years after the American invasion (Hickling-Hudson, 1989; Rose, 2002; Mocombe, 2005; Jules, 2013). Although the Revolution came to an end with the death of Prime Minister

Maurice Bishop and members of his cabinet on October 19, 1983, significant strides were made in the span of "1,681 days" to combat colonial structures, and socioeconomic hierarchies (Jules, 2019).

America's invasion on October 25, 1983 marked not only the nation's development shift, but also the region's path for growth. As a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM),[1] Grenada has adopted regional policy frameworks in national education policies with reference to creating the "Ideal Grenadian Citizen" – that is, "a valued and productive member of national and global society" (Grenada, 2006, 6, 11). This vision is influenced by CARICOM's concept of the "ideal Caribbean person/citizen/worker", which promotes markers of productivity for a competitive regional workforce through a global-oriented framework (Jules, 2014). As the CARICOM document outlines, the "Ideal Caribbean Person" is someone who can demonstrate multiple literacies, critical thinking skills, a positive work ethic, respect for cultural heritage, and creativity and its development in economic and entrepreneurial spheres (CARICOM, 1997).

To deepen the coordination of such skilled workers, CARICOM developed a strategy for the uniform delivery of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and introduced Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs). This regional certification scheme ensures the ability to demonstrate occupational competency standards and

[1] The *Treaty of Chaguaramas*, signed in 1973, established the Caribbean Community and Common Market, primarily consisting of English-speaking countries previously under British control. After socialist-oriented development efforts in the region, the *Treaty* was revised in 2001, asserting the shift from a "conservative, inward-looking, protectionist, functionally constrained organisation to an open, liberalised, efficient, internationally competitive, outward-looking and deliberately flexible institution" (CARICOM, 2001; Hall and Chuck-A-Sang, 2007, 3, 117-118).

facilitates the free movement of skilled labour amongst member states (CARICOM, 2003; Newstead, 2009). In 2009, Grenada established the National Training Agency (GNTA) to oversee the local development and delivery of TVET and of CVQs as a "viable entrepreneurial, growth building and honourable alternative in the labour market" (GNTA, 2017, 10). This opening came a year after the World Bank reported that a "lack of skills and education" remained the main obstacles for Grenada's economic competitiveness, adding that education and training systems were "*not* grooming school leavers and the unemployed for the available jobs" (emphasis in original, Blom and Hobbs, 2008, 4, 10).

Against this background, I conducted a study in 2019, also the 40th anniversary of the Revolution, to investigate how these official discourses and targets of education for development are interpreted and experienced by the subjects of policy— youth. My focus was on young people between the ages of 16-24 attending "second-chance" education and training organisations, or the non-formal education sector (NFE). Following Henri Lefebvre's (1991) model on the social production of space, this article presents a sociospatial analysis on the concept of "second-chance" education as conceived by the state, perceived by the organisations, and lived by the students. The complementary perspectives of state representatives and organisation staff were included in the study as their views informed and interacted with the lived practices of youth in non-formal learning. This analysis reconceptualises the meaning of "second-chance" education as a space *for* youth representation. It reveals gaps between institutional discourses of youth development and the diverse experiences of youth *in* development. The findings presented derive from a more extensive study aimed at

having youth in NFE participate in the conversation on Grenada's development (Perez Gonzalez, 2020). Together, the study suggests that young persons are not merely recipients of doctrine but rather responsive agents. Their strategies in pursuit of opportunities reflect not only educational shortcomings and strengths, but also critical development and growth projections.

Background – Education, Formal Schooling and TVET

Grenada consists of three small islands with a combined area of 133 square miles (344 $km^{2)}$ and less than 110,000 inhabitants— around 75 percent comprising of African ancestry and nearly 50 percent of the populace under the age of 30 (Grenada Tourism Authority, 2020; National Portal Government of Grenada, n.d). Despite its small size, the country has experienced complex development shifts that make it an interesting and important case study. These transitions include British colonial legacies, a violent dictatorial leadership (1967-1979), the first and only socialist-oriented revolution to come into power in the Anglophone Caribbean (1979-1983), a direct invasion by the U.S. (1983), and a shift towards deepened regionalism and global market participation. Amongst these unique contexts, education remains an important sector that continues to be reshaped for development objectives. Thus, to understand the deeper implications of these shifts, it is pivotal to examine how young people and workers alike relate to the nation's trajectories for growth through their education experiences.

Noting the socioeconomic effects of inherited and inadequate learning systems, the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) pushed for an education sector "fashioned in our own image"; centred on improving community-school relations and increasing domestic

economic independence with relevance to the nation's topography (Bishop, 1982). As De Grauwe (1991) observes, participation and collectivity were significant components of the educational values of the PRG, in contrast to schooling reforms by the New National Party (NNP) (an interim government after the U.S. invasion). Although both governments advocated for re-orienting elements of education to the world of work, they had different approaches, "the PRG stood for a politically relevant education for liberation, built up through participation of students, teachers, and community. The NNP advocated a politically neutral education, characterised by discipline and order" (1991: 351). Chadwick and Albrecht's (1989) study follow some of the direct impacts of these transitions on secondary school students' educational and career aspirations. Their findings showed that the presence of American forces had been considered a setback by students in their education goals, due to dissatisfaction arising from perceptions that the PRG's promises were withdrawn. In effect, many of the Revolution's programmes and reforms were altered or discontinued after the invasion (Mocombe, 2005). Nonetheless, the role of education remained central for the tri-island state's development.

Currently, formal schooling systems face challenges in engaging with students and preparing them for the desired world of work. Although Grenada achieved universal secondary education in 2012, this feat centred on the quantity of students entering secondary school rather than the quality of their preparedness (Knight, 2014). Students with weak literacy and numeracy skills continue to be given passing grades, and consequently, dropout and repetition rates at the secondary level remain a concern (Grenada, 2014; Knight, 2014).

According to the Caribbean Development Bank, the region also exhibits some of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world in comparison to other regional groupings (Cunningham and Correia, 2003). Grenadian youth (aged 15-24) in particular, account for 42 percent of all unemployed persons in the country, with young males facing a higher risk (Trinidad & Tobago, 2007-2008). In response, the government has expanded the implementation of TVET and CVQs to address the transition of young people into the labour market. In 2013, the government launched the New IMANI Programme to tackle youth unemployment by offering financial assistance and job training to young persons between the ages of 18-35 through GNTA-approved facilities (Lewis, 2010). However, the Programme faces scrutiny due to the continuation of stipends despite youth participants not attending placements, and in some cases, stipends exceeding pay of full-time employees, which has prompted resentment and a view of encouraging dependence on government handouts (Cunningham and Correia, 2015). In the 2017-2018 school year, the state also equipped five secondary schools to provide CVQs, but only one of these registered enough students to implement the programme. Of these, only 11 received a level 1 certification for general construction (GNTA, 2018).

Amongst ongoing efforts to reconcile shortages of skilled labour with high unemployment levels and the demands of a changing economy, the GNTA continues working to strengthen training institutions' capacity to deliver certified training. In 2011, the Agency began to issue CVQs, and by 2018, 3,976 persons received accreditation (GNTA, 2016; GNTA, 2018). Nonetheless, compounding issues have made the appeal and implementation of TVET a challenge due to social stigmas

and gendered divisions of labour that hinder interest in technical training. For instance, in 2018, 78 percent of those that received certification were females against 22 percent males. As the GNTA notes, a key issue is attracting and retaining males to complete their CVQ training (GNTA 2018).

The contrast between development discourses and practices of education in Grenada raise critical questions on what the role of education should be. Concerns surround the increasing demand for skilled workers in the face of high youth unemployment, the relevance of an academically-streamed curricula in an economy that is increasingly service-based and agricultural, and, as scholars point out, the continuing implications of systemic inequities in education that are overlooked by a narrowing focus of transitioning youth into the labour market (Bailey and Charles, 2010; Lewis, 2010). In effect, reform efforts have done very little to re-think the function of education across the region (Louisy, 2001; Jules, 2008; Hickling-Hudson, 2004; 2015). Nevertheless, the engagement of youth in the processes of learning, whether formal or non-formal, remains an area that requires further inquiry. This article, therefore, draws attention to the important role that spatial representations play in producing and accessing a NFE space. And more importantly, the ways in which students identify and respond to these complex contexts through their active participation in non-formal learning.

Conceptual Framework and Aims: Situating "Second-Chance" Education

Scholars have acknowledged that structural differences play a significant role in students' opportunities to enlarge their capabilities, especially those that go beyond schooling standards (Robeyns, 2016). There are organisational

differences between formal schooling and non-formal education: the former a hierarchical, chronologically graded system, and the latter a programmatic approach to education (Brennan, 1997; La-Belle, 1981; 1982). Notably, as NFE spaces are more voluntary and encouraging of new learning approaches, they not only focus on the completion of academic subjects or acquisition of skills, but also on how youth come to see themselves in and around the experiences of transitioning into adulthood (Romi and Schmida, 2009; Polidano et al., 2015). That being said, “second-chance" education has become a prime example of NFE, principally because it recognises how learning opportunities are structured and accessed differently for different groups of youth (McFadden, 1996; Munns and McFadden, 2000; Ross and Gray, 2005).

However, the increasing focus of NFE on implementing TVET programmes draws notable concerns, particularly in small island states where great dependence is maintained on external actors. Despite government efforts to simultaneously confront education matters and issues of youth unemployment through TVET, the supply and demand side of labour invariably remains sensitive to foreign market interests (Lewis and Lewis, 1985; Watson, 1994). Moreover, emphasis on educational progress measured through global benchmarks of growth neglects contextual specificities of states, and the possibility of unemployment rising amongst youth due to imposed foreign policies, rather than only domestic outcomes (Sehnbruch et al., 2015). In the Caribbean, for instance, increasing requirements for linkages of education with the global world of work are inconsistent with historical mechanism for growth. Until recently, an “unlimited supply of labour” was historically the economic driver in the region, with limited and unequal linkages between

education and the productive sector (Maloney, 2006). The shift to increase these relations on an international scale accentuates the prevalence of neocolonial terms and standards that continue to legitimise selected forms of knowledge for growth (Louisy, 2004). Consequently, these attributes contribute towards the disconnected reception of TVET in the region, as vocational training is often viewed to be inconsistent with opportunities for upward mobility in society due to "status-effect" notions and stigmas entrenched by colonially inherited academic education systems (Foster, 1965; Selveratman, 1988). These sentiments endure through memories of enslavement that have rooted an "aversion to and contempt for manual labour", and subsequently affect the consideration of and legitimacy for TVET in education sectors (Williams, 1951, 35; Lillis and Hogan, 1983).

Although the views mentioned acknowledge the various tensions between education (in)formalities and sustainable paths for development, the literature is inadequate in examining the ranges and the diverse experiences, challenges, and interests of youth. It generally fails to see them as the focus of education discourse, and in particular, fails to explore their understanding of and interest in NFE spaces. As youth strategies for development increasingly involve movement in pursuit of opportunities, the manner in which young people are defined and define themselves varies greatly through time and space (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2008). Thereby, youth development necessitates acknowledging youth *in* development, including their interactions with resources that are available to them in addition to those they seek.

My study aimed to engage with students between the ages of 16-24 to examine how they respond and relate to the country's strategies for growth through their

participation in "second-chance" education organisations. However, focusing on youths' lived experiences necessitates contextualising the sociospatial bounds and access to NFE. Thus, the relationships between educational discourse, organisation objectives, and student experiences were conceptualised using Henri Lefebvre's (1991) model on the social production of space that encompasses two aspects of social space and the practices that mediate, and are mediated by, the social spaces (33, 38-39, 52; McCann, 1999, 172-173). The triad includes:

(i) *Representation of space* (conceived space): conceived spaces are constructed through discourse, or bureaucratised space. This form of space-making remains abstract and homogenous as it is visualised and produced through the role of planners and social engineers rather than directly lived. However, while it emphasises homogeneity, it also exists by accentuating difference.
(ii) *Representational space* (perceived space): perceptions of space are acknowledged through associated images and experiences that in effect help produce a meaning of space.
(iii) *Spatial practices* (lived space): lived spaces embody a close association between daily and urban reality. It is the everyday routines and experiences that are mediated between the two social spaces created, such that it is practiced within the bounds of conceived abstract spaces, while being shaped by perceptions of used space.

On deepening an understanding of the sociospatial process of NFE, my study showed how "second-chance"

education was formed and informed by different relations to abstract and material spaces, and to the symbolic pedagogical structures that NFE represents. This was attained through the conceived perspectives of state representatives from the Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and the Arts (MOYSCA), the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD), and the GNTA; the perceived role of the organisations as outlined by the staff of the Grand Anse Social Development Centre (GASDC), the Programme for Adolescent Mothers (PAM), and the New Life Organisation (NEWLO); and the lived practices of students attending these "second-chance" education and training organisations. Through spatial analysis, this article breaks down the social construction of NFE in relation to the development landscape imagined and lived for the function of diverse ideals, ultimately redefining the role of youth *in* development. As Gulson (2001) emphasises, there is a need to convey where schooling takes place and how education itself relates to and makes space, allowing for a more engaged understanding of discourses in practice.

With this background, the article will first provide a brief overview of the NFE organisations examined followed by an outline of the methods employed in the study. Second, the spatial analysis of "second-chance" education will follow, presenting the state's conceptions, the organisations' perceptions, and the lived practices of youth as they navigate social and material NFE spaces. Lastly, by examining the social construction of "second-chance" education, the discussion notes the deeper complexities at play within educational shortcomings and realities. The article unpacks not only discursive gaps in the concept of education for development, but also how youth actively re-

define themselves in a globalised and changing world in pursuit of opportunities.

Identifying "Second-Chance" Education: The Organisations

My study focused specifically on three organisations that were recurringly identified by community members as offering youth a "second-chance" at education. Although these spaces share similar approaches, they also have key differences. An overview of each is provided below.

The Grand Anse Social Development Centre

GASDC opened in 1999 catering to young female students between the ages of 14-18. The organisation supports students who are not performing well in the formal sector, but are interested in learning a skill (GASDC, 2019). Students are encouraged to work at their own pace and to achieve their potential through the training opportunities that develop leadership values and social skills. Training offered includes food and nutrition, hairdressing, clothing and textile, and computer literacy, in addition to academic courses in preparation for the Caribbean Examination Council's (CXC's) final exams in subjects under the MOE curriculum. The GASDC has been working towards becoming a CVQ approved centre, with a GNTA audit held in 2016 (GNTA, 2016). At the time of study, 27 students were enrolled.

The Programme for Adolescent Mothers

PAM began operating in 1994 with a focus on empowering teenage mothers and pregnant adolescents up to age of 19. The organisation provides counselling and continuing education support through an integrated approach of MOE subjects in preparation for CXC's and skills training, such

as textile and clothing, food and nutrition, and health and family life courses amongst others (PAM, 2018). Although the Education Act does not prohibit young mothers from returning to school, there are stigmas that discourage adolescent mothers from continuing or returning to their formal studies. Thus, PAM provides the option for students to complete their secondary education with free nursery care. PAM underwent an audit in 2017 by the GNTA and is working towards becoming an CVQ certified centre (GNTA, 2017). At the time of study, 28 students were enrolled.

The New Life Organisation

NEWLO was founded in 1984 to support youth from vulnerable backgrounds who shared an interest in TVET—most prominently youth who dropped out or who were discouraged by their inability to keep pace with formal academic structures (NEWLO, 2020). The organisation provides a learning space for both male and female youth between the ages of 17-24. Its structure is also unique to Grenada, as it first requires students take part in an Adolescent Development Programme (ADP) to develop general competencies in numeracy and literacy, as well as life skills that emphasise personal development. There are ten programmes offered, including hospitality arts, plumbing, general construction, cosmetology, and garment construction (NEWLO, 2020). The in-class training is supplemented with internships and job training. NEWLO is certified with the GNTA and offers CVQs. At the time of study, around 210 trainees were registered.

Methods

During three months of fieldwork in Grenada, attention was placed on the meaning given to "second chance" education based on experiences by the participants. In

total, 21 interviews were held with all groups, which allowed individuals to express in-depth interpretations (Seidman, 2006). Two focus groups were also conducted; however, these were kept solely for youth participants as the approach provided an opportunity to engage with students in a manner that facilitated sharing and analysing individual and group outlooks (Chioncel et al., 2003). The research questions posed in both methods were initially informed by regional and national educational discourses and literature on NFE, however through field observations these were continuously adapted and revised based on contextual specificities. Recognising that I was an outsider to the Grenadian environment, I often reflected on my position and used it to establish certainty in relation to whose search was more "valid" but also "less intrusive" (Crick, 1989; Merriam et al., 2001; Cross, 2006). This was especially the case when speaking with different participants on sensitive topics like memories of the Revolution, and on personal learning experiences. On this matter, consistent emphasis was placed on confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the importance of comfort.

There are two limitations to the study. First, youth voices are not represented equally. There was a disproportionate representation of female participants, particularly youth, since NEWLO is the only space for young males. Recognising this, I inquired on the reality of this discrepancy with staff and government participants and would suggest that this is a point for further study. Second, the research did not include youth from sister-isles Carriacou or Petite Martinique, as the study took place on the mainland. I realise that this did impact my efforts to emphasise Grenadian youth voices, but I would also encourage this as an opportunity for further research.

Producing "Second-chance" Education Spaces

In studying the meaning and practices surrounding "second-chance" education, it became apparent that interpretations varied amongst respondent groups based on their perception, relation to, and participation with NFE. This section presents findings on the social construction of "second-chance" education as analysed through Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad. First, government conceptions and representations of "second-chance" education are examined. Second, the representational space of "second-chance" education as perceived by organisation staff. And finally, the spatial practices and mediated experiences of youth in "second-chance" learning are analysed. Altogether, these views were complemented by the spatiality of youth bodies as expressed with how they use, occupy, and relate to social and material spaces of NFE in and outside of Grenada.

Conceiving of "Second-chances": A State Perspective

When conceiving of "second-chance" education, state representatives conveyed their understanding in relation to mainstream youth development discourses, noting that "second-chance" education spaces were (1) for youth who were falling back, (2) for youth of age who were unemployed and unemployable, (3) and as a space where youth could be functionally integrated and categorically conceptualised into socio-legal and economic contexts.

In conversing with participant 1(G), there was initial awareness to some of the challenges youth face in formal schooling. Principally, a mastering of literacy and numeracy skills, the challenges of implementing TVET in secondary schools, and the subsequent role of "second-chance" education within these learning imbalances,

> "There is a comfort zone of teaching to the average learner, but the average learner happens to be an underperformer […] We tried introducing CVQs in 5 pilot schools in 2017, and even the teachers themselves, they perceive [the curriculum] to be overloaded and too many subjects […] and if the children are weak, again they need more time. So, for that reason the introduction of CVQs was on top of 32 subjects already, and there was this turn between having students who wanted to do CVQs and having those core subjects. Although the buzzword is TVET, only 7 students were able to complete the programme in 2 years […] And when you ask why, they say parents didn't want their children to be there because skills are deemed to be that of children who can't make it with academics. So, it's a paradigm, a shift that has to take place, it's a big cultural shift that is required."

The meaning of "second-chance" education followed,

> "…given how things are happening for students in their basic education, who doesn't deserve a second-chance? Because in a lot of the cases, the students will have fallen through the crack through no fault of their own […] there will be many success stories coming out of second-chance activities in Grenada. Yes, persons who were thought to be dunce have blossomed into highly skilled professionals coming out of second-chance initiatives […] we do need second-chance institutions for students who

> don't get a second-chance while they are in the basic education program"

On this view, "second-chance" education was perceived as supplementary to the general function and limitations of education. However, it was expressed as a separate space guided by different efforts for a differentiated imagining of young persons, or those "thought to be dunce". This view was also informed by unsuccessful implementation and generational conceptions of NFE. In this way, "second-chance" education was mapped as a space that redresses structural and individual learning challenges.

Official 2(G), expanded on the importance of "second-chance" training in the context of economic growth, arguing that current education systems were "not fit for purpose",

> "A country will always have issues if the policies that guide education is not fit for purpose […] the education system is training people on the more white-tie positions when there is growing demand for skill-based personnel. So, you always going to be importing people to fill big positions within your country when the education curriculum is actually not fitting what we are looking for."

Their understanding of "second-chance" education was linked back to the new IMANI Programme and goals of the government initiative to address youth unemployment,

> "Well, it can go both ways, it can go as a second-chance initiative, and also as a first-chance initiative because we do have a lot of people in the [IMANI] programme who are highly qualified but are looking for a job, or for the experience. So, in that case they are not looking for a second-chance, they are looking for a first-chance because they would've never worked before [...] the second-chance programmes that we do are based on skills and TVET. So, what they would've missed out from high schools, they actually get it from the programmes we are implementing"

Respectively, the relations between skills as curriculum, labour market as opportunity, and government-led efforts as providing "second-chance" training for youth conveyed an abstract understanding to how youth ought to be organised within education settings and society, wherein employability was regarded as key. As such, a discursively constructed space relating to a cohesive form of society was suggested through an improvement of youth skills that can address unemployment and unemployability.

There were also categorical considerations to take into account in evaluating the institutional construction and access to "second-chance" education spaces. While speaking with these officials, gendered and age-appropriate approaches were used to rationalise the socioeconomic purpose of "second-chance" education and the distinction of youth bodies that occupy these spaces. For participant 1(G), the idea of access was framed around the role of the organisations and the socio-legal contexts of the state, noting although legally age remains the only limitation to completing formal education, "the

system is not really receptive to adolescent mothers returning to the secondary schools", thus PAM was the only alternative for young mothers,

> "Persons have been advocating for a return of pregnant students because the fathers in most cases are in the schools and they continue, but the girls can't because of our religious heritage […] some of them who really struggle, they can also go to [GASDC], or NEWLO [but] NEWLO only takes them at 16 and sometimes you have them dropping out at 14, so they basically become street children because they must be of age to get into NEWLO"

Participant 2(G) relatedly recognised that although the new IMANI Programme aimed to ameliorate gender parity in "second-chance" training, it remains geared towards persons between the ages of 18-35, given that "under 18 years it means we cannot pay them, or we cannot give them a stipend […] based on the laws". It was also indicated that NEWLO was the only "second-chance" learning space in Grenada for male youth under 18, given that those below 16 were legally under the MOE, and thus "truancy officers" were to play a critical role in encouraging the return to school.

Similarly, participant 3(G) suggested that young males were more socially accepted into the formal/informal labour market without necessitating a certified form of education, which seemed to be reasoned as to why they were not offered a "second-chance" space in the same way as young female students. However, the respondent noted that these gendered relations were now presenting barriers for youth in their pursuit of education

and self-development interests, consequently lending itself as reasons youth continue to drop out.

Perceiving "Second-chances": An Organisation Perspective

The produced meaning of "second-chance" education through the perspectives of organisation staff brings forth associated images of the education sector and the social experiences of students. This was evidenced by a shared perception that youth had been "failed" by formal systems limited to meeting specific academic benchmarks, rather than acknowledging and encouraging the different potential and abilities of students. By recognising the differing life stages and challenges students face in and outside school systems, staff perceived "second-chance" education as a space that symbolised and offered a foundational opportunity for youth to participate in their learning while enhancing self-development. Notwithstanding, the term "second-chance" became relative in some respects, as some considered it in relation to the opportunity for youth to "continue", while others used it in view of "starting over" in their education.

Since both GASDC and PAM follow an MOE curriculum for their academic subjects, teaching participants suggested that these sites provided students with the opportunity to "continue" their education, especially as it was a "chance" that was not offered in the formal system. With PAM specifically, the opportunity given to young mothers was perceived to encompass more than academic standards, as it was also an encouraging and supportive space, materially and through the curriculum, cognisant of not only the importance of education, but also the socioeconomic challenges adolescent mothers face.

Similarly, teaching staff from GASDC referred to "second-chance" education as an opportunity for young girls to continue and enhance their learning through an approach that catered to individual social development. This included academic and vocational skills but was understood to be a place for students who were academically "left behind" by the formal school system. However, respondent 1(A) questioned the unequal gendered obstacles to access "second-chance" learning,

> "I see what they have here as a second-chance because if they did not come here there is no way they can fit into the regular secondary school program […] They would definitely be left behind or just be wasting the money. As some people would say, they go up and they go out. They just pass them through and give them some subjects to write, knowing that they are not capable […] I am not so certain what happens to the male students, because [GASDC] only caters to girls, so I always wonder what is happening to the male student who would not have passed the secondary school exams […] that boy who might have been left behind in his reading, in his mathematical ability, in his literacy, what happens to him?"

Conceding to the challenges youth face in formal schooling, teaching staff in these two organisations perceived "second-chance" education as a site that incorporated and provided a more wholesome and practical learning opportunity for female students in relation to their realities, and the spaces of school and education. Markedly, for the three organisations, gender and age stood

synonymous with "second-chance" education access, especially as they were both determining factors to length of stay and opportunity to enrol.

The idea of "starting over" was more so used to describe "second-chance" education and training at NEWLO. However, this was understood to be because NEWLO follows its own ADP stages and CVQ standards. The suggestion of "starting over" referred to the opportunity given to male and female trainees for a new beginning, and for respondent 1(C), "the chance to feel important":

> "The second-chance education means giving people a chance, really that's what it means because if you think about it, most youth in the adolescent age […] they going through different phases, personal things, their own moods and all of that […] that is why we call it New Life Organisation […] that's why we start with the life skills. We give you a chance to start over […] So, some people need 10 chances, some people need 5, some people need 1, some people don't need. So, the word there is relative and of course it's also the youth could feel like okay, if I didn't do well this time, I also have NEWLO where I have another opportunity to do something with myself."

The self-empowerment, life skills and training offered in NEWLO were also viewed in relation to applicability, particularly in terms of employment opportunities. Participant 1(C) alluded to Grenada's weakened education system, a small population, constant rate of migration, and low turnover in employment sectors that were deemed to present challenges for youth to find stable and formal

employment. In recognising this constraint, the participant referred to responsibilities of the state,

> "Government needs to have foresight in terms of seeing how can we engage our young people, what can we do to create employment for them. So, it's not like we had during the Revolution; we had a lot of industry, a lot of agro-processing, they had the slogan "Grow what you eat and eat what you grow", so they did less importing. Government could do less importing to create employment […] with importation there's less room for farmers to produce on a mass amount. Grenada didn't import all these things; we canned our own fruits. So, there's a lot of things that they did before […] so we were there already, you know? But with the invasion of the U.S. coming in and all of that, some of the things been stolen and destroyed, some of these machines that was provided by Cuba and Russia and so on, you know? And we like back to square one. So, I think government needs to bite the bullet and say "look, we cutting back on our food imports bill and we're going to do this and do that", and engage the youth, creating things for them, so you can keep money in the economy and things could start rolling. It's going to be small but it's gotta start somewhere."

With reference to the Revolution, the respondent noted the pivoting points in the prospects of youth development and national growth. Markedly, "back to square one" reflected the regression to dependence on external actors and interests in Grenada, and the shift from a progressive

sense of self-sufficient and collective development, to individualist growth. That being said, for this participant, NEWLO offered youth an opportunity to re-shape their lives and actively learn while improving personal development. In effect, it was about "good brain washing".

For administrative staff of the organisations, there was a similar view to the notion of "second-chance" education as an opportunity for youth to learn something that was not previously offered. However, this was more so expressed by linking it back to community engagement, development, and the mission of the organisation. As respondent 2(C) explained,

> "Second-chance programmes within Grenada, [are] an avenue to help our young people redefine and rediscover their potential. Right, because they have it, that's why I use the word 're-define' and 're-discover'. It's there, just that in the course of their education, certain things didn't go well, and so they were not able to achieve whatever it is that they were supposed to achieve. But, the importance of second-chance programmes in Grenada cannot be overemphasised because as a small country— a population of about 110,000— every year we admit 210, between 210-240 young people who go through the programme. I mean, not all of them didn't finish secondary school, but a majority of them don't finish"

This respondent seemed to acknowledge the social responsibility of the nation and communities when it comes to the experiences of youth and their education systems, as referenced with the size and population of

Grenada and the intake of students. With this notion, "second-chance" education was perceived as a space that encourages youth to be active participants in the opportunities available, and to be ready for those they aspire, such that the goals of the organisations define boundaries of learning and lived spaces in ways that interact with youth.

Both teaching and administrative staff identified areas of concern within the formal education sector and national development, and likewise perceived "second-chance" spaces as offering an opportunity to address relevant and contextual concerns. To some extent, the organisations have become something more than a "second-chance", as these have become spaces that youth increasingly rely upon for relevant education, training, and self-development. That being said, organisation staff did not recognise a "second-chance" space in Grenada for boys below the age of 17 that offered those same opportunities.

Living "Second-chances": Student Experiences

In conversation with youth, "opportunity" became almost synonymous to their interpretations of and mediations in "second-chance" education spaces. However, their expression of opportunity differed in connection to their practices of learning. It is these differences that help inform the spatial practices of youth, and how they navigate conceived and perceived relations of space. For the purposes of this section, the mediations identified by youth are noted as (1) an opportunity in reference; (2) an opportunity to participate; and (3) an opportunity for spatial interactions.

In the interviews, participants expressed "second-chance" education as an opportunity in reference to their formal school experiences, and their perception of post-

secondary education to explain their understanding of pursuing and rationalising the "second-chance" education space.

Participant 6(D) expressed her interest and choice to join the organisation, referring to "second-chance" education as an opportunity implicit within the perceived space, and separate from previous schooling and education spaces and experiences:

> "People say NEWLO is better than [T.A. Marryshow Community College], in my point of view. In high school, we are learning about values, subjects […] Here, it's skills and abilities. If I don't finish school, NEWLO gives second-chance to prove ability and see strengths you may not get in high school"

Participant 4(D) also indicated his interest and choice to continue his studies in the organisation:

> "NEWLO gives chance to make best out of your time […] to build your skills. Not many colleges offer things NEWLO offers. To me, [it's] one of the best for students, doesn't only teach theory, but practical and experience at the end of the year. You get CVQ and get out in the world; they try to find work for you. I did consider to go to college, but then when I really sit and think about it NEWLO is much cheaper than college, and it offers one of the most greatest opportunities for teenagers, a second chance in life. It means a lot, because then I have new opportunity to get what I missed off in high school. To me it really means a lot."

Although the participants may have completed different levels of formal education, they both shared in the sentiment of gaining a new opportunity that was not available to them, or that they had not experienced. In this way, interpretation and assessment of "second-chance" education was influenced by lived experiences and the perceived benefits set out by organisation approaches (i.e. improving self-esteem, skills curriculum, financial). Notably, these were framed in relation to their critique of the unsatisfactory purposes conceived of formal education structures.

Second, the opportunity to participate was framed around the concept of engagement cited by youth in their responses. This included the opportunity to actively insert themselves in the processes of learning as informed by their ideas, outlooks, and aspirations. Thus, they relayed how "second chance" education, as a symbolic and pedagogical space, was used and lived.

Participant 2(B) expressed her education trajectory, bringing to light some of the direct impacts of the academic-streamed curriculum and a personal sense of loss that has been overlooked by the general conception of "youth who fall back". She shared some of her own passions for learning and continuing her education,

> "My dream goal was to be a veterinarian […] you needed biology, chemistry, all these big stuff you know? I was on board at a point in time, but then when things get really hard and you start falling back, and then you really didn't have the motivation to continue. So that was a big disadvantage and you know, it makes you very disturbed, mentally and physically. You don't

> see yourself succeeding in any of the courses in that area, so yeah, that was the biggest problem I had […] But, if you have a goal, a dream, that you would like to follow on, and you fall short on that, you could actually pick it up afterwards. That is what I am trying to do with me right now. Because you see, if you have a passion, you're going to do to your best abilities […] I'm good at writing, I'm good at reading, but I really have to focus where I can see a window, and right now my window is basically hairdressing, what I don't like, and food and nutrition, so yeah, that's where I am, stuck."

Her meaning of "second-chance" education followed,

> "Second-chance education is basically when you have a second-chance you should grab it, and you should not spoil it because the thing about it is, at least, there's many people out there who are willing to have a second-chance in life, and they don't have it, and you know, if you are lucky enough to get a second-chance I will say go for it. Don't spoil it, I mean, make a difference."

In noting that the methods of teaching in formal school were not suitable for her, she indicated that her opportunities lied in the "windows" that were open through "second-chance" education spaces, despite feeling "stuck". Although formal schooling structures had impacted her initial goals, it was her perseverance and having access to a "second-chance" at learning that remained in her outlook of possibilities. Nevertheless, education was central to her

visions of development, understood as an opportunity for self-realisation and participation to make a difference.

While speaking with student 5(D), he mentioned that he had recently moved to Grenada from another Caribbean nation. Although he did not attend high school in Grenada, he did share on some of his interests in pursuing NFE, particularly as it was the reason he moved:

> "They say NEWLO gives you a skill, high school gives you life knowledge, I believe. And me, when I was going to high school I used to go through a lot in life, you know, so my high school experience was more…hmm…more gangster…respect have to be given […] I reached to form four with the same kind of behaviour. I was going to form 5, but that was under a conditional pass […] certain things happen, and I got kicked out of secondary school […] Right now, you know, I'm looking at life differently, and I see something I can really work with to enhance my life, you know? Plumbing. Plumbing is unbelievably great, feel like a plumber already, you know? Feel professional already. I can use it to start my foundation in life, back it up with my electrical later on"

While considering their daily realities and the experiences of their surroundings, both students defined their sense of self with, in, and outside of the "second-chance" education as a pedagogical boundary and a representational space in their lifepaths. For both students, "second-chance" education was understood as a venue for an involved process of individual learning and growth, whether through windows of opportunity or working toward enhancing their

life. This sense of "second-chance" was practiced through visions of the opportunity to follow one's passions. And more importantly, it was about having a space that enabled the opportunity to actively do so.

Finally, spatial interactions as an opportunity are centred on understanding youth perceptions of "second-chance" education through a consideration of how they use space, how they relate to it, and how they plan to occupy it. In effect, mediating and "deciphering" "second-chance" education as part of their own social space (Lefebvre, 1991, 38). Although their relations with the organisation would have shaped their understanding, the responses to the meaning of "second-chance" education were relayed through personal sentiments continuously shaped by spatial practices.

For student 5(D) this came across when speaking about how his "second-chance" education experience continued to shape his sense of self and life experiences,

> "Second-chance education is like, wonderful, I wouldn't burn it down or say bad about it, it's a wonderful opportunity for people, for society, for everywhere, you know? So that people can actually make the best of themselves instead of living under that universe that they can't do anything because they don't have anything. There's another chance […] I gotta wait till next year to get my certificate, so yeah, I want to know where the hell will I get a job. People don't believe you until you show them some proof these days, but it is what it is. I don't mind [working in Grenada] but, [I'm] trying to work something out to get like a work visa to America

> […] life is all about making it and helping people making it"

The use of "second-chance" education as a social space comes as an opportunity to engage with society, to exercise movement, and to occupy broader spaces through the skills and confidence acquired.

Similarly, participant 1(B) referenced "second-chance" education as an opportunity implicit through the forms and processes of learning informed by past, present, and future convictions of schooling, employment, and movement. Based on her observations, she noted differences of "second-chance" education through her interaction with organisation activities and personal experiences:

> "You get the opportunity to do things, like we never do in the other schools before… I like when we doin' dancing, swimming […] we learn more skills and things like that […] I understand that nothing in life come easy, like things hard, you have to work to get where you want […] I don't want to stay home after graduation, like after I graduate I don't want to just sit at home and do nothing. I want to be active; I have skills I could do here and… I just want to make more money…I just don't want to stay home […] I don't want to work in Grenada. Here is too hard, too like rough. Like, I don't know, people in Grenada can't have money…well I'm trying to do my visa, my mother help me so I can go and meet my auntie in Canada."

Together, for these students, the spatial relationships involved in "second-chance" education included using their

skills both as “proof” and to be “active” in their communities, as well as broadening their abilities and considering opportunities outside of the organisations, the country, and the region. In this way, they were cognisant “users” of the conceived structures for productivity outlined by regional and national economic discourse, and also of the perceived images of NFE shaped by what opportunities their training offers. However, “second-chance” education was not only grounded on a skill or set within a classroom setting, rather, it was embraced as a social space that offered the opportunity to re-define individual strengths, abilities, and outlooks that ultimately placed them as producers for and agents of their own spaces.

Discussion

Discourses on education and development lose meaning when students do not feel a part of society, or believe they can fully participate (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2008; Ansell, 2017). This sense of disengagement was evident in the ways in which education stakeholders argued that schooling systems were unfit, and whereby youth expressed their criticism of imported learning structures, notably feeling “stuck”. As observed, the current system remains rooted in (neo)colonial structures and functions that are not conducive to the experiences or resources students are seeking. This was apparent through student accounts of ill-equipped formal learning structures, which did not meet their aspirations to be active in society, and it explains their increasing interest in NFE. With an emphasis on education for economic growth and employment, youth are also after opportunities and strategies to engage in the labour market, and it is technical skills and NFE that present a more viable and affordable option. The colonial imagining that remains in

Caribbean schooling has embedded a criterion for success based on approaching a distant ideal (James, 1969). And this remains true in Grenada, in so far as regional outcomes and international benchmarks have become the focus for measuring education progress and growth and as conducive to domestic development. As such, education in the tri-island state remains beholden to external support and interests, something Gregory (2004) and Hickling-Hudson (2013) refer to as a contradictory condition of the colonial present, but one which differs from the colonial past. Yet, as this study suggests it is not only about identifying the problems imposed, but also and more importantly of taking into account the way in which youth actively respond to these complex contexts.

Redefining Second-Chance Education Space

The spatial analysis conducted through Lefebvre's (1991) framework provided an understanding of how education opportunities are structured and accessed by different groups of youth through conceived, perceived, and lived spaces. For state representatives, conceived notions of "second-chance" education remained rooted in the discursive objectives of education. Initiatives like IMANI and the implementation of TVET in formal schools appear as reactionary efforts to engage youth rather than proactive measures. For example, CVQs in secondary schools were established within already weakened systems, which does little to affect TVET stigmas or improve learning support for youth. Consequently, NFE was viewed as an integrative practice for immediate economic needs rather than a sustainable approach for long-term socioeconomic development. In speaking with organisation staff, the perceived notion of "second-chance" education was marked by a space that offered youth an opportunity to "re-

discover" their potential and a pedagogical avenue to improve their self-awareness through resources and support not previously offered. And lastly, for youth, this concept was informed by interactions between the material and pedagogical spaces where they are able to improve their learning, engage in their abilities, and enhance their sense of self-awareness.

According to student narratives, those who continue or start over in their education through "second-chance" organisations are cognisant of the spatial relations associated with being in a small-island state, the movement afforded by CVQ certification, and proximity to the U.S. as impacting visions of development itself. Although experienced very differently for adolescent boys and girls, the interest to employ their skills and strengthen their abilities through these spaces appears and appeals as direct openings to a sense of mobility and autonomy that youth seek. For this reason, "second-chance" education contributes to the development of persons, not in isolation of labour market skills, but in addition to placing value on other capacities and experiences such as building self-esteem, moral virtues, and an appreciation of diverse learning backgrounds (Robeyns, 2016). Thus, "second-chance" education provides a social space where youth identify, navigate, and enact prospects of their own development, and a lived space in consideration of the needs of young persons and the roles that they can play in society through a holistic and heuristic approach to learning.

Redefining Youth Development

The study also revealed the many complexities that youth encounter in their relations between global and local exchanges, and importantly, how categories of youth are

continuously reshaped and redefined for development agendas. This matter became evident with varying restrictions and access to "second-chance" organisation spaces. In particular, gender and age were instrumental in marking the legalities and responsibilities of formal schooling, the age range for young girls to enter and graduate from PAM and GASDC, and the age range for young males and females to enter NEWLO as well as the IMANI Programme. In each, youth are defined as encompassing of different categories, although education stakeholders often referred to a homogenised concept of "youth". Mizen (2002) refers to this notion as a "transitional" construction of youth, claiming that in the state's defining process is the "political management of social relations" (6). In this way, youth categories are not only culturally constructed through CARICOM notions of the "ideal Grenadian/Caribbean person/citizen/worker", but also maintained in the division of labour and hierarchy of material relations that appear as a "natural and inevitable response to the steering logics of economic globalisation" (Maira and Soep, 2005; Rizvi et al., 2006, 255; Gilbert-Roberts, 2014a; 2014b).

This study itself categorised youth through a particular age range that also encompassed some of these variances. However, in being aware of these issues, the analysis sought to examine the contexts that have homogenised their status by drawing on the voices and realities of youth. Notably, for young persons who participated in this study, their sense of self was not merely defined by age or gender altogether (albeit impacted by these attributes), but rather by their capabilities, skills, and interests as learned and supported by "second-chance" education organisations, and how they could apply these along with their knowledge to the world around them.

Conclusion

In this article, I set out to provide a contextualised sociospatial analysis through heterogeneous and multi-agent perspectives on the production of "second-chance" education in Grenada. In doing so, revealing gaps and broadening the discursive scope of conceived and perceived approaches to "second-chance" education against the lived experiences of youth *in* development. Mainstream education and youth development policies have homogenised and conceptualised the status of young persons as a disadvantaged group based on socioeconomic concerns, such as youth unemployment and consequences associated with a waste of human capital (Gilbert-Roberts 2014a; 2014b). However, by recognising local youth practices within contexts of ongoing shifts, the article highlights the meanings young people have created for themselves through their interest in, participation with, and use of “second-chance” education. Through their interactions with NFE, students re-defined their sense of self and engaged with the opportunities they imagine in the interest of wanting to be "active." As such, their relationship to the "Caribbean/Grenadian ideal" was not entirely enacted the way policies outline, but rather formed and informed by the ways in which youth plan to occupy space in response to socioeconomic and geographic realities. In a way, national growth and regional integration prospects are fashioned in their own image as they navigate and pursue opportunities *for* representation.

This paper has presented conceptual and policy-related contributions in the hope of continuing the conversation on postcolonial directions in education with youth as responsive partners, critics, and agents of change *in* development. Amongst complex contexts on the

role of education in Grenada, youth strategies emerge as spaces of possibility to the trajectories of national progress. Thus, education reforms can no longer focus solely on the provision of basic schooling. They must also delve deeper to reconsider the compounded impact of global agendas on the quality of local learning, and the lasting implications of systemic inequities that continue to make education a disconnected sector to the potentials of the Grenadian environment. Drawing on memory of the Revolution, an organisation staff member noted, "we were there already."

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADP	Adolescent Development Program
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualification
CXC	Caribbean Examination Council
GASDC	Grand Anse Social Development Center
GNTA	Grenada National Training Agency
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOSD	Ministry of Social Development
MOYSCA	Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and the Arts
NEWLO	The New Life Organization
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NNP	New National Party
PAM	Programme for Adolescent Mothers
PRG	People's Revolutionary Government
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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